

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 99

**LD TITLE: "An Act To Allow Hunting for Deer with a Crossbow
during the Expanded Archery Season" (HP0081)**

SPONSORED BY: Representative WOOD of Sabattus

**CO-SPONSORED BY: Senator TUTTLE of York, Representative
TYLER of Windham, Representative JOHNSON of Eddington**

DATE OF HEARING: February 12, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Dutremble, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Jim Connolly, Wildlife Division Director at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST L.D. 99.

L.D. 99 would modify existing law and allow the use of crossbows during the expanded archery season.

Maine's deer population is a fixed size; there are a definite number of deer living in Maine. The size of Maine's deer population is regulated, in part, by the number of doe deer killed by the various forms of hunting. The Department attempts to control the number of doe deer killed within a range that will allow the Department to meet its deer population management objectives throughout the state. This means that each year only a specific number of doe deer can be killed by all means of deer hunting. If this number is exceeded, the deer population will decline causing other segments of the deer hunting community such as regular firearms, archery and muzzleloader hunters to have less deer to hunt.

Allowing new crossbow hunting opportunity may, or may not, result in an increase in the total number of doe deer killed by hunting. The expanded archery areas were set up to increase hunting pressure in an effort to reduce the deer population in areas where there is

limited or no firearms hunting allowed. The additional hunting pressure could result in a larger harvest that will help the Department reach its goal of reducing the deer population in the expanded archery areas. Should the number of deer harvested increase significantly; the Department would have to look for ways to reduce the doe kill. There are a number of options the Department utilizes to achieve a reduction in the doe kill. A reduction in the number of any-deer permits issued to firearm hunters would most likely be considered initially, as it is the most accurate method to regulate the doe deer harvest.

Providing additional crossbow hunting opportunity for deer hunters may result in reduced opportunity for hunters participating in other forms of deer hunting. While the Department can't predict the reaction of landowners in these more populated areas to the appearance of hunters using crossbows it is an area of potential concern. Should this bill pass, the ultimate success will likely depend on how respectful crossbow hunters are to landowners.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.